

From the Upper Chamber



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Report for Friday, February 29, 2008

The twenty-sixth day of the 2008 legislative session was called to order by Lieutenant Governor **Casey Cagle**.

Senator **Don Balfour** of the 9th stated that the journal had been read and was found to be correct.

Senate Bills 534 and 535, Senate Resolutions 1052, 1055, 1056 and 1060 and House Bills 255, 393, 544, 798, 887, 962, 978, 983, 1020, 1121, 1129, 1159, 1061 and 1201 were read for the first time and assigned to committees. The clerk then read the reports of standing committees and second readers.

After the morning roll call, Sen. **Tim Golden** of the 8th led the Senate in the Pledge of Allegiance. He then introduced the *Chaplain of the Day*, Reverend **Willie Beasley** of the United Methodist Church of Valdosta, who led the Senate in the daily devotional.

SR 1053, 1054 and 1057-1059 were read and adopted.

Sen. **Gail Davenport** of the 44th rose on a Point of Personal Privilege to announce the passing of friend and Korean War Veteran, **Edward Gilbert**.

Sen. **Valencia Seay** of the 34th rose on a Point of Personal Privilege to announce the passing of Reverend **Howard W. Creecy, Sr.** of Olivet Baptist Church in Fayette.

The Senate Local Consent Calendar, consisting of HB 776 and 857, passed by a vote of 45 to 0.

The clerk read SB 348, which prohibits local governments from imposing any fees or taxes upon insurance companies for covering services involving motor vehicle accidents. Sen. **Ralph Hudgens** of the 47th took the well to present the Committee Substitute.

He yielded to questions from Senators **Michael Meyer von Bremen** of the 12th and **Seth Harp** of the 29th.

The Committee Substitute to SB 348 was unanimously adopted.

SB 348 passed by substitute by a vote of 40 to 8.

The clerk read SB 397, which provides that eligible housing units located in more than one county will come under the jurisdiction of either the superior court of the county where the authority is located or the superior court of any county where the housing units are located. Sen. **John Bulloch** of the 11th took the well to the present the bill.

SB 397 passed by a vote of 49 to 0.

The clerk read SB 488, which allows a non-citizen who is eligible for a Georgia driver's license or state-issued ID card to be issued a driver's license without having to surrender their foreign license or ID card.

Sen. **Chip Rogers** of the 21st took the well to present the Committee Substitute. He yielded to questions from Sens. **Judson Hill** of the 32nd and **Meyer von Bremen**.

The Committee Substitute to SB 488 was unanimously adopted.

SB 488 passed by substitute by a vote of 50 to 0.

Sen. **Steve Henson** of the 41st took the rostrum to introduce the *Doctor of the Day*, Dr. **John Heller** of Atlanta.

The clerk read SB 492, which allows high schools accredited by the Florida Council of Independent Schools to be eligible for the HOPE scholarship. Sen. **Bulloch** took the well to explain the Committee Substitute.

Sen. **John Wiles** of the 37th took the well to present Amendment 1, which allows students to receive the HOPE scholarship for the second semester of their freshman year if they have achieved an eligible Grade Point Average by the end of the first semester. He yielded to questions from Sen. **David Adelman** of the 42nd.

Sen. **Harp** took the well to speak in support of Amendment 1. He yielded to questions from Sen. **Ronald Ramsey** of the 43rd.

The Committee Substitute to SB 492 was unanimously adopted.

SB 492 passed by substitute by a vote of 50 to 1.

The clerk read SB 496, which prohibits mortgage businesses from influencing an appraiser's evaluation of a property.

Sen. **Horacena Tate** of the 38th took the well to present the bill. She yielded to questions from Sen. **Emanuel Jones** of the 10th.

SB 496 passed by a vote of 49 to 0.

The clerk read SB 506 entitled the *Student Health and Physical Education Act*, which would require local school systems to conduct physical fitness testing of students and to comply with state physical education instruction requirements.

Sen. **Joseph Carter** of the 13th took the well to present the Committee Substitute. He yielded to questions from Sens. **Jack Murphy** of the 27th, **Robert Brown** of the 26th, **Nan Orrock** of the 36th, **John Douglas** of the 17th, **Seay** and **Balfour**.

Sens. **Don Thomas** of the 54th and **Renee Unterman** of the 45th took the well to speak in support of the bill.

Sen. **Preston Smith** of the 52nd took the well to speak against the bill and the government's further involvement in local schools.

Sen. **Carter** took the well to close the debate.

The Committee Substitute to SB 506 was unanimously adopted.

SB 506 passed by substitute by a vote of 37 to 13.

The clerk read SB 512, which authorizes the distribution of a \$1,500 grant per academic semester to each eligible North Georgia College student who signs a contract to enter the Army. Sen. **Douglas** took the well to present the Committee Substitute.

The Committee Substitute to SB 512 was unanimously adopted.

SB 512 passed by substitute by a vote of 51 to 0.

Sens. **Murphy**, **Douglas** and **Bill Hamrick** of the 30th took the rostrum to recognize Sergeant **Richard Parham, Jr.** for his service as a State Trooper at the Capitol.

The clerk read SB 420, which will change provisions of the Soil *Erosion and Sedimentation Act* to exempt the DOT from civil penalties levied for certain violations.

Sen. **Chip Pearson** of the 51st took the well to present the Floor Substitute and Amendment, which makes language clarifications.

The Floor Amendment to the Floor Substitute to SB 420 was unanimously adopted.

The Floor Substitute to SB 420 was unanimously adopted as amended.

SB 420 passed by substitute by a vote of 43 to 6.

Following the announcements, Majority Leader **Tommie Williams** of the 19th moved that the Senate stand adjourned until 10:00 a.m., Tuesday, March 4.

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